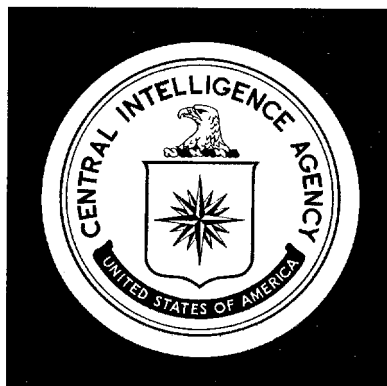


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Intelligence Memorandum

Answers to NSC Staff Queries

on Topics Treated in 8 June 1972 Memorandum--

The Effect of the Past Month's Events
on North Vietnamese Military Capabilities
(TCS-2677/72)

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
27 June 1972

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

ANSWERS TO NSC STAFF QUERIES ON TOPICS TREATED
IN 8 JUNE 1972 MEMORANDUM -- THE EFFECT OF
THE PAST MONTH'S EVENTS ON NORTH VIETNAMESE
MILITARY CAPABILITIES (TCS-2677/72)

The following paragraphs present the Central Intelligence Agency's answers to questions posed by the NSC Staff on the earlier memorandum cited above. We have adhered to the format and order of the questions as they were given to us, and we have set forth our answers immediately following each question.

* * * * *

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I. Petroleum

A. How long will POL stocks last and when do you estimate consumption plus losses will force major cutbacks in activity levels?

On 22 June 1972, petroleum stocks on hand in North Vietnam were between about 50,000 metric tons and 70,000 tons, corresponding to between 50 and 70 days of supply at currently estimated consumption levels for both military and civilian uses. These estimates do not reflect the undetermined but probably small quantities of petroleum that have entered North Vietnam overland from and through China since the mining program began.

Unless a reliable flow of petroleum is established, and significant quantities are received in the meantime, major cutbacks in activity levels in North Vietnam would probably have to occur soon after mid-July. At that time, stocks theoretically would correspond to about 30 days of supply. Such stocks would be widely dispersed throughout the country, however, and, because redistribution would be difficult and wasteful, local shortages of petroleum would begin to develop in areas where there were imbalances in stocks.

These estimates do not take account of possible future losses of stocks due to US interdiction programs. Losses in recent weeks, however, appear to have been small. The nature and disposition of the small dispersed tanks, where much of the petroleum is stored, make them very difficult to destroy in large numbers.

B. Can the North Vietnamese import a substantial part of the average annual rate of 400,000 tons (first quarter of 1972 would stretch out to 600,000 tons per year)?

C. How much by truck?

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D. How much by the pipeline under construction?

North Vietnam is wholly dependent upon imports for petroleum, which for the past four years have averaged close to 400,000 tons annually, a daily rate of about 1,100 tons. Even if Hanoi were to strictly ration its civilian petroleum consumers, consumption could be reduced by only 50,000 tons -- to a daily rate of about 1,000 tons.*

Under prevailing conditions reflecting an increase in truck activity to transport imports overland and with a decrease in water craft and tank activity, North Vietnam's minimum petroleum requirements may be broken down as follows:

Motor gasoline	50% -- 500 tons per day
Diesel fuel	40% -- 400 tons per day
Kerosene, jet fuel, lubricants, other specialty items	10% -- 100 tons per day
Total	<u>100%</u> <u>1,000 tons per day</u>

The pipeline now under construction probably would have a minimum throughput capacity of about 1,000 tons per day.** However, the design of the system makes it unlikely that it could be used for

* Historically, imports in the early and late months of a year are higher than the monthly average for the year. Deliveries, reflecting Soviet transport availability, normally decline in the summer months.

** The rapid construction of the line to China suggests this segment consists of a Soviet-type portable system in which sections of pipe are clamped together. The line pipe probably is 4 inches in diameter with a designed optimum capacity of 1,130 tons per 24 hours, similar to that constructed in the Panhandle of North Vietnam. (The Soviets also have a system consisting of 6-inch-diameter line pipe designed to operate at 2,260 tons per day.)

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multi-product service. Such service involves operation on a sustained basis at reasonably high pressure and velocity, substantial storage along the route for accepting the interface between products, and sophisticated operating techniques to avoid contamination, all of which probably are beyond the capabilities of the North Vietnamese.

We assume, therefore, that Hanoi intends to use the new pipeline exclusively for motor gasoline to meet its minimum needs of this product. Hanoi will probably attempt to move the other petroleum products by truck from China into North Vietnam as indicated below.*

- a. The daily requirement of 400 tons of diesel fuel would require the equivalent of about 135 tank trucks moving south daily with an average load of 3 tons (1,000 gallons). Approximately 540 tank cars would be required for a four-day round trip from the Chinese border to Hanoi.
- b. The daily requirement of 100 tons of kerosene, jet fuel, lubricants, and miscellaneous products probably would be transported in 55-gallon drums or other similar containers. The movement of 100 tons per day would require an estimated 50 cargo trucks southbound each day with an average load of 2 tons (each truck carrying about twelve 55-gallon drums). Approximately 200 cargo trucks would be required for a four-day round trip from the Chinese border to Hanoi.
- c. Some combination of a and b.

We cannot be certain when the new pipeline will be put into operation. The observed tempo of construction of both the line and ancillary

* See also our response to question III, B.

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facilities suggests that they could be completed in the next week or two, unless construction work is delayed by the US interdiction program more than has been the case to date.

E. Would the amount of POL that you estimate the North Vietnamese will be able to import materially affect North Vietnamese ability to sustain a high activity level in the South?

On an annual basis Communist petroleum requirements for use outside North Vietnam are estimated to be only slightly over 5% of Hanoi's total petroleum imports. During the next two or three months, Hanoi's need for petroleum outside North Vietnam will be at its lowest level in the annual cycle. With heavy rains severely restricting vehicle activity in the Laotian Panhandle and Cambodia, the amount of petroleum required there decreases proportionately. Furthermore, the Communists' requirements for petroleum products inside South Vietnam are small in total tonnage and do not represent a significant burden on their logistic system.

North Vietnam should be able to meet its petroleum requirements for the rest of this summer in all areas outside its own territory from currently existing stockpiles. Our limited evidence suggests that each dry season the Communists attempt to ship into Laos and store throughout their logistics network an amount of petroleum equal to roughly one and one-half times their needs for that dry season. This volume covers losses resulting from air strikes and provides a reserve for use during the subsequent wet season. Thus, after their successful logistic campaign of the past dry season, the Communists should have ample supplies of petroleum products dispersed throughout Indochina to meet most of their wet season needs.

Even in the longer run, the Communists should be able to meet their petroleum requirements outside North Vietnam without too much difficulty. Since, as already indicated, these requirements comprise only slightly more than 5% of Hanoi's

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total demand for petroleum, they could probably be met -- albeit perhaps not without difficulty -- by stringent conservation of petroleum that would normally be used elsewhere. The movements of this petroleum will be facilitated by the extension of their petroleum pipeline which is difficult to interdict and easy to repair. When the segment from the North Vietnam/China border is completed, the pipeline system will be capable of moving gasoline directly to the DMZ and the southern Panhandle of Laos. A greater (but unquantifiable) constraint on Communist military activity in the South would be the amount of petroleum used in North Vietnam's own domestic transport system in direct or indirect support of the military activity outside North Vietnam. A fully operational pipeline system, however, would clearly reduce even these difficulties.

F. How effective would our interdiction be against the estimated imports?

Since 1968, when the North Vietnamese began constructing their extensive petroleum pipeline system, attempts have been made to interdict it both in North Vietnam and Laos. These attacks do not appear to have stopped pipeline operations for any appreciable length of time: the pipeline is only 4-6 inches in diameter and frequently buried or concealed by foliage and dirt, making it a difficult target. Because the system apparently is designed to withstand moderate concussion, almost direct hits are probably required to put it out of commission. The most effective weapon system to use against the pipeline is probably the B-52 because it lays a pattern of bombs across the right-of-way of the lines.

Up to the present, when a section of pipeline has been damaged, the North Vietnamese have proved able to repair it quickly. An NVA pipeline worker captured during Operation Lam Son 719 in the spring of 1971 has reported that the breaks are usually found within 30 minutes and, depending on the amount of pipe destroyed, are repaired by crews in a period varying from half an hour to a day. According to the same source, the enemy routinely caches pipe and other supplies at strategic

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locations to facilitate repair work. This report is generally supported by [REDACTED] analysis which has shown sections of pipeline back in operation within a day or two of being struck. The most vulnerable parts of the pipeline system are the storage areas and pumping stations, which are harder to repair or replace. These facilities, however, are widely dispersed, relatively small, and often hardened or hidden. Our evidence concerning the enemy's contingency planning suggests that the North Vietnamese probably have a supply of replacement pumps on which to draw.

25X1D3a

Experience to date in the present LINEBACKER campaign appears to support the statements above. For example, although the pipeline south of Vinh was struck several times early in the campaign, [REDACTED] by 13 June all observed interdictions had been repaired. Photography shows similar, apparently effective repair in the areas north of Vinh.

25X1D3a

In sum, it appears unlikely that an interdiction campaign mounted against the petroleum pipeline will keep essential supplies from flowing, unless the line can be broken on a daily basis -- or better, several times a day -- and in many locations simultaneously. The difficulties of accomplishing this are manifest.

For those petroleum supplies (diesel fuel, kerosene, jet fuel, lubricants, etc.) which must be moved from the Chinese border by truck, the interdiction program may be more effective in reducing the flow.* Based on past experience, however, we judge that the Communists, by transporting supplies at night and using by-pass roads, will be able to move some portion of the petroleum products other than gasoline which they need.**

* Air attacks of 11 June against trucks on Route 1A between Dong Dang and Hanoi resulted in large secondary fires ("a continuous wall of flame" according to pilots), suggesting that the cargo of these trucks was petroleum.

** Hanoi's capabilities to move supplies could, of course, be enhanced should the Chinese provide assistance with manpower and equipment along the lines of communication within North Vietnam.

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Whether the North Vietnamese will be able to meet their minimum requirements for both civil and military uses cannot as yet be determined.

- G. With the lower level of tank activity in the South, is the North Vietnamese POL requirement substantially less?

The demand for diesel fuel for tanks is such a small part of the total petroleum demand that the lower level of tank activity would have a marginal effect on total petroleum consumption. We estimate that the enemy's annual petroleum requirements -- at a high level of military activity -- for trucks, tanks, and other needs outside North Vietnam are roughly 20,000 tons. As noted above, this is only slightly over 5% of North Vietnam's minimum annual import requirements.

That portion of the petroleum requirement needed by Communist tanks operational in the South is difficult to estimate because we have virtually no information on the distances traveled by tanks once they are deployed to combat areas. Our computations indicate, however, that no more than 36 tons of diesel fuel were required daily when most of the tanks deployed to South Vietnam were in combat early in the current offensive. Since the enemy has already suffered heavy tank losses, and since in the coming several months the use of tanks will be limited by bad weather except in northern MR 1, we estimate that 5 to 10 tons of diesel fuel per day would be a generous allowance to keep the currently deployed tanks operating. Over the course of the summer this should amount to no more than 1,000 to 2,000 tons of diesel fuel.

- H. To what degree has the diminished tank POL consumption been offset by increased truck operations required as a result of interdicted rail lines?

Petroleum requirements associated with increased truck activity in North Vietnam have more than offset the reduced petroleum consumption by tanks. Wet season petroleum requirements for both trucks and tanks deployed outside North Vietnam are estimated to be slightly less than 25 tons per day,

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while the dry season daily requirement is probably about 80 tons. Petroleum requirements generated by the higher level of truck movements inside North Vietnam, however, probably have increased by at least 130 tons per day. The 130-ton estimate is the amount of petroleum required by some 2,800 trucks to deliver about 2,200 tons of essential supplies daily overland from China to the Hanoi/Haiphong area.* The estimate assumes that the northern rail lines are interdicted and that 50% of minimum demands for petroleum are satisfied by the pipeline. Although petroleum requirements for truck movements south of Hanoi have also increased, the increased tonnage of gasoline required for trucks will probably be offset somewhat by a reduction in the tonnage of diesel fuel needed for coastal shipping.

The net impact of the reduced out-of-country requirements in the South and the increased activity in the North is to raise petroleum requirements by an estimated minimum of about 75 tons per day. Projected over a four-month wet season, the aggregate increase would be 9,000 tons, slightly more than 2% of North Vietnam's minimum annual petroleum requirements.

* For the calculations on which the figures of 2,800 trucks and 2,200 tons of essential daily supplies to be delivered by truck from China are based, see our response to question III, B.

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II. Armor and Artillery

- A. Can we expect to see armor used as it was at the beginning of the offensive? Have losses of tanks and skilled personnel been so great as to rule this out?

The considerable losses of NVA tanks and experienced armor personnel, coupled with the oncoming monsoons in Military Regions (MRs) 2 and 3 and the Laotian Panhandle, will mean a reduced NVA capability to deploy and use armor in these areas of South Vietnam during the next several months. As of 19 June, 429 enemy tanks are reported to have been destroyed or captured in South Vietnam since 30 March. Of this total, some 269 (or 63%) were lost in MR 1, 52 in MR 2, and 108 in MR 3. These reported losses are almost certainly inflated -- they exceed the estimated total initial deployment of tanks to South Vietnam.* Nevertheless, enemy tank losses within South Vietnam unquestionably have been heavy. Although it is not possible to make a firm estimate of actual NVA tank losses, analysis of the reporting of tank losses that occurred during Operation Lam Son 719 suggests that the actual number of tanks destroyed or captured since 30 March may be about 60% of the number reported, or on the order of 250. We believe a substantial number of crews also have been lost with these tanks and -- based on what we know of their training problems -- we doubt that the NVA is in a position to replace all these crews. A recently captured prisoner from the 166th Battalion of the 202nd Armor Regiment indicated that his battalion suffered 200 casualties out of an original strength of 450 men in its attack on South Vietnamese forces in Quang Tri Province in late April.

* Some 320 to 400 tanks, or about 55% to 60% of North Vietnam's total inventory of between 500 and 700 tanks appear to have been committed initially to support the current offensive. This initial deployment of armor, however, does not reflect the entire NVA commitment of tanks against South Vietnamese forces -- it does not include replacement of losses in MR 1 or the use of captured South Vietnamese tanks and armored personnel carriers.

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Despite the large amount of armor committed to the fighting to date, a number of factors have contributed to blunting the effectiveness of NVA armor in the current offensive. These include poorly coordinated North Vietnamese infantry-tank tactics, effective Allied air and helicopter gunship tactics against the tanks, and the improved use of the M-72 antitank weapon by South Vietnamese forces. Furthermore, since the NVA's initial employment of tanks in MRs 1, 2, and 3 was not particularly skillful, the better ARVN units quickly lost their psychological dread of tanks through seeing their vulnerability. By and large, ARVN ground troops have been quite effective in knocking out tanks, particularly troops in well-led units. Some commanders offer incentives such as cash bonuses for each tank destroyed. Prisoners and captured documents suggest that at least the latter stages of the expansion of the NVA Armor Command in preparation for the current offensive were poorly planned, with inadequate provision for training. COMINT also indicates that the NVA has had some problems in getting all the armor to planned areas of employment on a timely basis.

Field reporting has provided some information on the quality, training, and combat experience of armored personnel in the current offensive. For example, a prisoner from the 297th Armor Battalion captured in Kontum Province of MR 2 indicated that no one from his company had ever received field training in coordinating the movement of tanks with infantry units. A prisoner from the 397th Armor Battalion captured in Quang Tri Province of MR 1 stated that a number of troops in his battalion were inadequately trained and poorly motivated. He indicated that some replacements received prior to infiltration had been former deserters and others were new recruits who had received only two months of basic infantry training. Of the some 30 officers in his battalion, only about half had received extensive tank training. In addition, there was a shortage of armor-trained non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Only 60 of the approximately 175 men of his battalion were classified as veteran armor-trained NCOs and soldiers, and none had ever had combat experience with an armored unit. These factors plus the low level of morale of the troops, according to the prisoner, seriously affected the combat readiness

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of the battalion at the time of its infiltration. Documents captured from the 397th Armor Battalion also reflect the poor capabilities of newly assigned cadre, as well as shortages of equipment, presumably spare parts.

B. Have the North Vietnamese been able to replace losses in the South?

Hanoi has not been able to replace all its tank losses in South Vietnam. The last armor unit known to have arrived in South Vietnam was a battalion-size group which arrived on 6 May in Binh Long Province of MR 3. Since then, there has been no evidence of additional NVA armor deploying from North Vietnam to the Laotian Panhandle or north-eastern Cambodia which could be replacements for MRs 2 or 3. Given the fact that we now are well into the rainy season in southern Laos and that it takes roughly two to three months in good weather for tanks to travel from North Vietnam to the B-3 Front of MR 2 and the southwestern provinces of MR 3, it is unlikely that any replacements for tank losses will be sent to MRs 2 and 3 from North Vietnam until well into the next dry season.

In MR 1 the NVA has apparently replaced some armor. The heavy tank losses sustained in the fighting in the area of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces and the continuing use by the NVA of substantial numbers of tanks strongly suggest that additional tanks have been brought into the area from North Vietnam since the original deployment of armor. Some of these replacements may be from the 201st Armor Regiment which was being held in reserve in North Vietnam, although we have no evidence confirming this. In addition, some armor units are apparently being formed on an ad hoc basis from other types of units in northern MR 1. Prisoners captured on 21 June near My Chanh indicate that their unit was originally an infantry battalion which was converted to an armor battalion after it infiltrated into South Vietnam in order to provide replacements for the 202nd Armor Regiment. Despite the fact that some armor replacements have been received in MR 1, it is not believed that the North Vietnamese have made up all of their losses.

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- C. What effects will weather have on the North Vietnamese ability to use armor and artillery and on its ability to move heavy supplies (e.g., ammunition and fuel)?

Except in northern MR 1, where dry weather should prevail through August, constraints imposed by weather patterns in Indochina are the single most important determinant of the North Vietnamese capability over the next several months to move heavy weapons and supplies. In fact, North Vietnam's ability to move heavy weapons and supplies already has been considerably restricted by the early weeks of the rainy season. In coming weeks, the poor weather will increasingly affect the Communists' use of armor and artillery as routes become non-motorable and heavy weapons bog down in mud. The summer rains annually force the Communists to remove from service their heaviest trucks, which, even when loaded, are much lighter than tanks. Thus, except in MR 1, we expect that the NVA's use of tanks during the summer will be limited. Furthermore, it is unlikely that any new tanks or heavy artillery will arrive in southern South Vietnam from the north until late this year. In MR 1, on the other hand, artillery (if not tanks) probably will continue to play an important role in any major NVA operation during the next several months. The importance that Hanoi attaches to artillery in northern MR 1 is reflected in the fact that during the current offensive, Hanoi has committed at least six NVA artillery regiments to this area, compared with a previous high during past dry seasons of only three. The enemy is currently attempting to move heavy artillery, including 130-mm field guns, into the Hue area.

The rainy weather also will affect the movement of supplies. Despite the enemy's effort to maintain his logistical momentum in the Laotian Panhandle, heavy rains during the latter part of May have already forced a reduction in transport activity. Countermeasures by the North Vietnamese, including graveling and rapid repair of roads, have allowed the continuation of a relatively low level of logistic activity in some areas but have not been sufficient to enable the enemy to maintain a steady flow of supplies through the Panhandle. As the wet

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season continues, the cumulative effects of rain and bombing will make the Communists' logistic task progressively more difficult.

We believe the Communists have substantial stockpiles of supplies in place in the southern Laos/Cambodia area from which to continue activity. Rear services communications throughout the past dry season revealed the movement of large quantities of supplies through the area, quantities considerably greater than we estimate were needed to meet Communist resupply requirements in southern South Vietnam and Cambodia. As a result, considerable supplies should now be stockpiled. One indication that this is the case is a recent intercept from one element of Binh Tram 37 noting that 1,000 tons of supplies were available at one of its storage areas. Other storage areas should also be well stocked.

One very important factor influencing Hanoi's options during the summer is that its logistical capabilities are greatest in northern MR 1, making this the important potential battle area of the next few months. Given the relatively good weather, the Communists will face no natural obstacles to the delivery of supplies directly across the DMZ. The cost of such delivery will be high because of heavy US air bombardment in the area, but if they are willing to accept heavy losses, they will probably be able to move into MR 1 the supplies necessary to support a relatively high level of combat. Another less important but still significant factor also works to ease the enemy's logistical problems in MRs 3 and 4. This is the fact that the Communists have demonstrated a wet season capability to move supplies by boat from Laos into Cambodia, from where at least modest amounts can be moved onward to support tactical activity in southern South Vietnam. When rains prohibit truck movement, the Communists rapidly shift their resupply effort to the rivers. The quantity of supplies moved, while certainly less than during the dry season, would probably be adequate to meet the enemy's daily requirements in southern South Vietnam and Cambodia at a modest level of activity.

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III. Trucks

A. What is the North Vietnamese truck inventory?

We estimate the North Vietnamese truck inventory at roughly 18,000 to 23,000 vehicles. This range is based largely on [REDACTED] estimated requirements for trucks in North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Of the total inventory, some 4,800 vehicles are believed to be engaged in military operations outside the country.* 25X1D3a

In past years, North Vietnam's suppliers of trucks have kept Hanoi well stocked from their ample production with vehicles despite heavy losses inflicted by US air attacks. [REDACTED] 25X1D3a

[REDACTED] 25X1D3a
[REDACTED] 25X1D3a
[REDACTED] Overland vehicle imports from the USSR scheduled for the month of May totaled 628, less than half the truck park turnover figure, suggesting that either the Soviets increased their shipments, or that imports from the USSR were complemented by undetected shipments from China or Eastern Europe. We believe most of the trucks in the Dong Dang parks have been imports on the way in, but some increasingly may be involved in the new transport effort from China. 25X1D3a

B. Are North Vietnamese increased demands for truck transport supportable?

Assuming that the severely interdicted overland import rail lines in North Vietnam are not used, the cross-border highway network and the North Vietnamese truck inventory contains sufficient capacity to handle minimum required imports. In 1971, total North Vietnamese imports amounted to about 2.5 million tons, or an average of 6,800 tons per day. Principal commodities included foodstuffs, petroleum, fertilizer, machinery and equipment, and -- although not a large share of total tonnage -- military ordnance. With the mining of the major North Vietnamese

* Includes 4,000 in southern Laos, 400 in northern Laos, and 400 in Cambodia.

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ports, which forces practically all imports to be brought in overland from China, imports could be pared to only those items essential for basic economic needs and to continue the war at near present levels. We estimate that minimum essential import requirements* on an annual basis would be about 1 million tons, or 2,700 tons per day, as shown in the following tabulation.

	<u>Thousand Tons</u>
Petroleum	<u>350</u>
Economic goods	<u>175</u> a/
Metals and metal products	70
Machinery and equipment	15
Transportation equipment	14
Other	77
Military goods	<u>65</u>
Ammunition, weapons, and military equipment for use in North Vietnam	38
Ammunition, weapons, and military equipment for use in Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam	27
Unidentified imports	<u>425</u>
Total	<u>1,000</u> a/ (2,700 tons per day)

a. Because of rounding, components do not add to the totals shown.

* We assume no food in this minimum import requirement. Coming off its fifth-month harvest, North Vietnam probably has enough domestic food supplies to feed its people until the next harvest in October/November of this year, although some belt-tightening would be necessary. Once the next harvest is reached, food supplies should be adequate into the first months of 1973.

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We estimate that the petroleum component of 350,000 tons will be divided into 50% motor gasoline, 40% diesel fuel, and 10% kerosene, jet fuel, lubricants, and other special petroleum products. If it is also assumed that the petroleum pipeline now under construction between North Vietnam and China will soon be operational, then this pipeline will probably be used to move the motor gasoline requirement of about 175,000 tons a year, or 500 tons a day. The remaining cargo requiring truck transport would be about 825,000 tons a year. This would be about 2,200 tons a day, of which 500 tons would be petroleum -- diesel fuel and special products. A total of 1,700 tons of all cargo other than petroleum would have to be moved each day.

Assuming four tons a truck for non-petroleum imports, and four days for the 200 mile round trip into the Hanoi area from China, the movement of 1,700 tons a day of non-petroleum imports would require the full time commitment of about 1,700 trucks. Adding a 20% to 25% factor for repairs and local distribution, 2,100 trucks would be needed to move minimum non-petroleum imports.

Truck requirements for diesel fuel are based on 3 tons per tank truck. If 400 tons a day of diesel fuel are to be moved from China to Hanoi, 540 tank trucks would be required to sustain this movement. If the 100 tons a day of special petroleum products were imported in drums, another 200 trucks would be needed. Together, truck requirements to meet the estimated product mix equal about 2,840 trucks.

The 2,840 trucks required to move cargo overland from China represents in gross terms only about 10% to 15% of the estimated North Vietnamese truck inventory. This increased demand is supportable by the current inventory. It should be noted, however, that we have no firm fix on the availability of 540 additional tank trucks in the North Vietnamese truck inventory. If these tank trucks are not available in North Vietnam, they could be provided by the Chinese or the requirement could be met by "jury-rigging" flat-bed trucks with petroleum storage tanks, as has been done on occasion in the past.

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There will also be an increase in truck requirements south of Hanoi because the North Vietnamese must shift some traffic from the severely damaged Hanoi-Vinh rail line and the mined coastal areas to trucks. Because a large portion of economic goods imported overland from China is consumed in the Hanoi-Haiphong area where the population is greatest and the most important industries are located, however, the overall additional truck requirements south of Hanoi probably could be absorbed by the existing inventory.

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IV. Combat Effectiveness of Main Forces

How much has combat effectiveness of the main force units been hurt by personnel losses, particularly NCO and officer losses? How do we assess the quality of replacement personnel and how will this affect combat effectiveness of particular units?

What North Vietnamese units are now ineffective? What percentage of the forces?

How long will it take to put these units in good fighting condition? (It would be most helpful to have a unit-by-unit assessment in response to the questions on combat effectiveness.)

Clearly, the combat effectiveness of many enemy main force units has been seriously impaired by personnel losses during the current offensive in South Vietnam. Although we lack precise data on which to base judgments of the combat effectiveness of many units, our "best guess" is that as many as 40% of the infantry regiments which the enemy has committed to the current campaign may at present be temporarily combat ineffective or at best marginally effective -- that is, either undergoing rest and refitting or possessing personnel strengths below the level necessary to initiate strong attacks. While Hanoi sent a large number (at least 120,000) of infiltrates to the southern war zones during the current infiltration cycle (1 September 1971 to 1 June 1972), and regeneration of battered units proceeds apace, the enemy has been forced to integrate green troops and cadre into these units. This cannot help but reduce overall combat effectiveness, even though Communist forces still remain capable of large-scale main force activity.

The time it takes to restore a unit to good fighting condition depends largely on the extent of the losses, the availability and quality of replacements, and the morale and leadership of the unit. The combat readiness of an infantry unit during a prolonged offensive fluctuates according to a cyclical pattern. Generally, a unit which has been committed to fighting and has incurred heavy losses will stand down for some period of

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time for rest and refitting before being sent back into combat. Thus, at any given time during an offensive, a number of units will be rebuilding while others are fighting or available for combat.

During the current offensive, the time needed to rebuild a unit has varied considerably, ranging from two to three weeks in some instances to a month or more in others. Examples of the former include units of the 308th Division (MR 1), 320th Division (MR 2), and the 5th Division (MR 3). Units which have taken a longer time to return to good fighting shape include elements of the 324B Division (MR 1) and the 7th and 9th Divisions (MR 3). Those units of the 320th Division which rebuilt quite rapidly early in the fighting in the central highlands of MR 2 are now taking a longer time during the second round of refitting. Almost all regiments committed to combat during the current offensive have undergone at least one period of rebuilding and many have undergone more than one. It should be noted that each time a unit has to rebuild, its combat capability is progressively reduced, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Seldom are units brought back up to pre-offensive strength.

Following are more detailed responses to the questions on combat effectiveness, arrayed by Military Region. The Appendix provides a unit-by-unit assessment directed to these questions.

Military Region 1

The enemy has suffered heavy losses throughout the course of the 1972 offensive in MR 1. On the basis of available information, enemy units suffering particularly heavy casualties include the 88th Regiment of the 308th Division and the 29th Regiment of the 324B Division. During June, the 88th Regiment reportedly had 40% casualties, while the 29th Regiment suffered about 50% casualties in late May. Other units, including the 18th Regiment of the 325th Division, the 66th Regiment of 304th Division, and the 27B and 270th Regiments as well as Group 31 of the B-5 Front have seen frequent combat since late May. These units and their supporting artillery, armor, and air defense elements almost certainly have sustained extensive heavy

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losses from B-52 bombing, Allied tactical air strikes, and ground operations.

The North Vietnamese have committed seven division-size entities to the fighting in MR 1.* These forces contain 23 infantry, 2 armor, and at least 6 artillery regiments. Moreover, there are elements of 10 antiaircraft artillery regiments deployed in the DMZ and northern MR 1 area. Seven of the 23 infantry regiments are currently in the process of refitting or have recently suffered debilitating casualties. Because several units have demonstrated a capability to refit within two to four weeks after the last date of heavy combat activity, two of the regiments should be ready to conduct combat operations by late June 1972. The remaining five regiments probably will not be able to regain full combat effectiveness until mid- to late July 1972.

The limited reporting we have received indicates that the loss of experienced cadre clearly has had a significant impact on the combat effectiveness of North Vietnamese combat units. Reporting throughout the period of the offensive suggests that many replacement personnel are young (usually between the ages of 16 and 18 years, although our prisoner-of-war sample does not show a sharp drop in average age) and are often poorly motivated and insufficiently trained. Many replacements have been assigned to units during heavy combat activity without the respite that is needed to recuperate from the hardships of infiltrating from North Vietnam. The hardships that are faced during infiltration, however, are less in the case of MR 1 than for the other Military Regions, which are a greater distance from North Vietnam.

The North Vietnamese thrust across the My Chanh River into the South Vietnamese Marine defenses in late May 1972 provides a good example of the reduced combat effectiveness of combat units after a period of rest and refitting. Major elements of

* The seven division-size entities are 325th, 308th, 304th, 324B, and 711th Divisions and a division equivalent from both the B-5 Front and Tri-Thien-Hue Region.

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five enemy infantry regiments supported by armor forces, but with practically no artillery support, temporarily breached the Marine defense line. The attack broke down, however, when the Marines counterattacked using extensive air, artillery, armor, and naval gunfire support. North Vietnamese prisoners captured in the engagement reported that the North Vietnamese attack was very difficult to coordinate with supporting tanks and adjacent combat units.

Military Region 2

There is ample evidence that the combat effectiveness of enemy units operating in the western highlands of MR 2 has been substantially impaired during the last two months. All three infantry regiments of the 320th Division have suffered extensive casualties, with the 48th and 52nd Regiments having taken the heaviest losses. The 28th Regiment of the B-3 Front reportedly suffered 900 casualties, and its remaining personnel strength totaled only about 700 men in early June. The normal strength of the 28th before the offensive was 1,500 men. Other evidence indicates that the elements of the 203rd Armor Regiment which are located in the highlands of MR 2 have lost about 75% of their tanks. In the attack on Kontum City, the 141st and 1st VC Regiments of the 2nd NVA Division, along with the 66th Regiment of the B-3 Front and the 406th Sapper Battalion of the Kontum Provincial Unit, suffered heavy casualties and were forced to leave the Kontum area to refit.

There is less information on the losses sustained by enemy units in the coastal lowlands. The 12th Regiment of the 3rd Division was badly hurt by South Korean and ARVN troops when it attempted to block highway 19 in early May. The 3rd NVA Division has taken over northern Binh Dinh Province, however, and is currently engaged in harassing government positions around Phu My district town. With the exception of the fighting in Phu My district, however, South Vietnamese Armed Force's resistance to the 3rd's activity has been light.

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Poor command and control of enemy units in the recent battle for Kontum City resulted in the piecemeal commitment of some B-3 Front units and allowed the defenders to engage the Communists one unit at a time. Losses of ranking officers may have contributed to the enemy's command problems. One recent report indicates that both a battalion commander and the deputy chief of staff of the 48th Regiment of the 320th Division were killed in the battle. This regiment, according to other evidence, sustained 50% casualties in this and subsequent battles.

Field reports suggest that the quality of replacements being received in MR 2 this season is somewhat below that of previous years. Usually, insufficient training is cited in these reports. Because most trainees appear to have had standard infantry basic training, we believe a lack of unit training is the primary problem. Normally, in the past, infiltrators who had moved to MR 2 spent from one to two months' training in rear areas prior to being committed to battle. The heavy demand for replacements this year has apparently greatly reduced or eliminated this post-arrival training.

Of the nine infantry regiments deployed in the B-3 Front area, seven currently are estimated to be ineffective or only marginally effective. Most of these units have now been out of heavy combat for about three weeks, however, and could be back in action in the near future. The three infantry regiments of the 3rd NVA Division located in Binh Dinh Province have seen only moderate combat activity in recent weeks. They are currently believed to be effective. Both of the artillery regiments in MR 2 are rated as effective, but the armor regiment is not.

Military Region 3

Three of the four enemy infantry divisions operating in MR 3 have been significantly weakened, including losses in command structures. In addition, at least one unit of the C-30B Division, the 271st Regiment, appears to have been ill-prepared for its new role as a main force unit and has suffered heavy casualties. Of the 16 infantry

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regiments which have been operating against MR 3, at least eight are now combat ineffective or marginally effective. Newly arrived infiltrators, used as replacements, appear in general to be young and inexperienced and are pushed into battle with no rest after the infiltration journey. Although enemy units in MR 3 cannot regain the strength they had at the beginning of the offensive for a considerable time, all but three regiments could be made at least marginally combat effective within one month's time.

The 5th Division provides a good illustration of why enemy units become less effective each time they take casualties, even though replacement personnel may be available. The reduced fighting capabilities of the 5th resulted from the loss of a substantial portion of its leadership, inexperienced replacement personnel who have never before fought in South Vietnam, and a reduced overall troop strength. The 5th Division was most successful at the beginning of the offensive at Loc Ninh but, because of casualties, much less effective in its efforts to overrun Tri Tam. When it was called back north from Tri Tam to join with the 9th Division in the final attempts to take An Loc, it appeared to be still weaker, despite having received replacements. The 5th was then hurriedly reorganized and refitted, and this probably contributed to its having suffered heavy casualties in the present fighting in the Parrot's Beak area. Although this division is still engaged in combat, it is as a whole considered to be only marginally combat effective.

The NVA 7th Division, probably now at about half of its original strength, is considered to be at least marginally effective because it is still accomplishing its objective of blocking Route 13. Prisoners from the 7th indicate that even though it has suffered heavy losses, the leadership has been able to maintain high morale. Other enemy main force units in MR 3, except possibly elements of the 9th Division, still appear capable of the defensive holding-type action being accomplished by the 7th Division. It will be difficult for the Communists, even when several divisions are grouped together, however, to carry out the type of offensive thrusts that they engaged in during the first two months of the offensive.

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As in other areas of South Vietnam, one factor which has contributed to a weakening of the enemy's offensive capability in MR 3 has been leadership failings. A prisoner from the 271st Regiment, C-30B Division, has stated that soldiers from two battalions of the regiment became so demoralized and bitter toward their commanding officers that they threatened violence against these officers "for leading them into battle to be massacred." These reported leadership failings may in part account for the fact that the 271st has fared poorly throughout the offensive even though it has operated primarily against South Vietnamese regional forces.

Military Region 4

Enemy main force strength in and near MR 4 remains relatively intact. Extended engagements, such as have occurred in Quang Tri-Hue, Kontum, and An Loc, have not developed in MR 4 to date, and the only main force enemy units that have suffered are those in the Phuoc Long Front (formerly known as the 1st NVA Division). Of the 13 enemy regiments in or near the Delta, four -- subordinates of the Phuoc Long Front -- are considered only marginally effective at this time. These, however, apparently have been refitting in Cambodian base areas since early June. They may now be ready and, if not, certainly will be ready within the next two to three weeks for deployment against South Vietnamese forces. The nine other regiments, while still maintaining a moderate degree of effectiveness, have sustained casualties since the start of the offensive and especially in the fairly heavy combat of the last few weeks.

Ineffective NVA units among those currently engaged are limited to battalion and smaller elements of the enemy's divisions and regiments. The prime example is the newly designated 11th Division in Chuong Thien Province (formed from units already in the Delta), which had several of its battalions badly hurt by Allied firepower during ground assaults in April. In addition, a rallier has disclosed that another of the Division's battalions was virtually decimated by an air strike during that period. Except for these, all other regimental or larger entities are considered effective because they have been engaged in only moderate combat.

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A Final Comment

The discussion in the paragraphs above has dealt primarily with the enemy's offensive capabilities. These have been significantly weakened in most areas of South Vietnam. The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong still have a substantial main force capability, however, and retain the means to put up stubborn resistance to Allied efforts to drive them out of areas over which they have extended their influence since 30 March. If they were deeply dug into defensive positions, many of the enemy's units which we have labeled as ineffective or only marginally effective could probably give a good account of themselves against attacks by South Vietnamese forces.

APPENDIX

North Vietnamese Unit Deployments in South Vietnam

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
<u>Military Region 1</u>		
325th NVA Division		
18th	Marginally effective	The division headquarters along with those of the 95th and 101st Regiments are located in northeastern Quang Binh Province, North Vietnam. The 18th Regiment has engaged Vietnamese Marines since late May 1972 through 20 June 1972 in southeast Quang Tri Province. The regiment is marginally effective.
95th	Effective	
101st	Effective	
308th NVA Division		
36th	Effective	Since early April 1972 the entire division has seen heavy fighting at Dong Ha and Quang Tri Cities. In early June 1972 the division regrouped and resupplied near the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province Border. Since that time, two regiments have deployed near Hue City while a third regiment, the 88th, is only marginally effective as a result of heavy combat in mid-June 1972. The regimental commander of the 88th was reported killed in action in late May 1972.
88th	Marginally effective	
102nd	Effective	
304th NVA Division		
9th	Effective	Since early April 1972 the entire division has seen heavy fighting at Dong Ha and Quang Tri Cities. In early June 1972 the division regrouped and resupplied in the vicinity of the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border after having conducted limited offensive operations against South Vietnamese Marines in late May. This action resulted in additional heavy casualties for the division. During June 1972, the 9th Regiment deployed to the vicinity of Hue City, the 24th moved into reserve, and the 66th engaged Vietnamese Marines in northeast Quang Tri Province. It is marginally effective as of 20 June 1972.
24B	Effective	
66th	Marginally effective	
68th Artillery Regiment	Effective	

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
<u>Military Region 1</u> (Continued)		
324B NVA Division		
29th	Effective	The entire division has experienced heavy combat activity since early April 1972. The 803rd Regiment has conducted heavy ground assaults against units of the 1st ARVN Division at Fire Support Base (FSB) Bastogne west of Hue City since mid-March 1972 resulting in heavy losses. As of 20 June 1972, the 803rd was attacking South Vietnamese forces at FSB Bastogne west of Hue City. There have been several reports suggesting that the 803rd has not been able to adequately replace its combat losses. In early May 1972, the 812th Regiment conducted heavy ground attacks against Vietnamese Marine elements near FSB Nancy south of Quang Tri City, resulting in heavy casualties for the regiment. In mid-May 1972 the 812th deployed to the vicinity of FSB Bastogne west of Hue City and was preparing for combat against South Vietnamese elements as of 20 June 1972. Until mid-May 1972, the 29th Regiment had not experienced heavy combat activity. However, since that time, the regiment has been engaging South Vietnamese elements in the vicinity of FSBs King, T-Bone, and Bastogne.
803rd	Effective	
812th	Effective	
<u>B-5/Front 70</u>		
126th Naval Sapper Group	Effective	The Group headquarters is located in the DMZ area, north of the Ben Hai River, but elements of the unit have been operating in the vicinity of the Cua Viet River for several years and probably have participated in the NVA attacks against Dong Ha City and Quang Tri City where casualties were probably heavy as a result of Allied ground operations and tactical air operations. However, sufficient time has elapsed to allow the unit to regain combat effectiveness.
84th Artillery Regiment	Effective	COMINT of 21 May 1972 located this unit in the eastern DMZ. However, prisoner-of-war reporting suggests that elements of the regiment are supporting the 308th and 304th NVA Divisions in Thua Thien Province. The extent of casualties is unknown, but Allied tactical air operations probably have been responsible for some casualties in the unit.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
B-5/Front 70 (Continued)		
38th Artillery Regiment	Effective	This artillery regiment has provided the majority of 130-mm artillery support for NVA offensive operations at Dong Ha City, Quang Tri, and Hue City areas. Most of its casualties have resulted from Allied tactical air operations. As of 20 June 1972 the regiment was deployed for tactical operations northwest of Hue City near the Vietnamese Marine defense line at the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border area.
164th Artillery Regiment	Effective	Since 1 April 1972, elements of the regiment have been located in northeast and southeast Quang Tri Province. It has provided artillery support for attacks on Dong Ha City, fired at US Naval vessels off the coast of Quang Tri Province, and supported ground attacks of the 304th NVA Division against Vietnamese Marine elements in the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border area. As of 20 June 1972, elements of the regiment were prepared to support a new thrust against Vietnamese Marines northwest of Hue City.
166th Artillery Regiment	Effective	This regiment was first identified in southeastern Quang Tri Province during mid-May 1972. As of 20 June 1972 the regiment was providing artillery support for elements of the 304th and 308th NVA divisions and the B-5 Front.
675B Artillery Regiment	Effective	This regiment was recently identified in Thua Thien Province on 18 June 1972. It is believed to have redeployed from southern Laos in early 1972 and has not engaged in combat operations.
202nd Armor Regiment	Ineffective	Elements of both regiments have spearheaded attacks against Dong Ha City, Quang Tri City, and Vietnamese Marines near the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border area conducted by the 304th and 308th NVA Divisions and elements of the B-5/Front 70. Tank losses are believed to be very high as a result of Allied air strikes and South Vietnamese infantry antitank actions. On 20 June 1972, elements of the regiments engaged Vietnamese Marines in southeastern Quang Tri Province, resulting in additional losses. Estimated recovery time for the armor units is unknown. It is possible that the 201st Armor Regiment also may now be in Quang Tri Province. In addition, some armor units may be being formed on an ad hoc basis from other types of units in northern MR 1. Prisoners captured on 21 June near My Chanh indicate that their unit was originally an infantry battalion which was converted into an armor battalion after it infiltrated South Vietnam in order to provide replacements for the 202nd Armor Regiment.
203rd Armor Regiment	Ineffective	

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
B-5/Front 70 (Continued)		
27B Infantry Regiment	Marginally effective	This unit has seen heavy combat activity since 1 April 1972 at Dong Ha City, Quang Tri City, and northeastern Thua Thien Province. In mid-June 1972 the regiment engaged Vietnamese Marines in southeast Quang Tri Province and as of 20 June 1972 was considered only marginally effective.
Group 31	Ineffective	The regiment experienced heavy ground combat activity in the vicinity of Dong Ha City in late April. In late May and early June the regiment engaged in heavy combat activity with Vietnamese Marine elements along the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border area. As of 20 June 1972 the regiment was considered combat ineffective with recovery time of two to four weeks.
270th Infantry Regiment	Ineffective	During April and May 1972 the regiment was located north of Dong Ha City and engaged in logistic activities with elements of the 164th NVA Artillery Regiment in northeast Quang Tri Province. In late May and early June 1972 the regiment engaged Vietnamese Marines along the Quang Tri/Thua Thien Province border area and is considered combat ineffective. Since that time the unit has been unlocated and is believed to be refitting, possibly in North Vietnam. Estimated recovery time for the regiment is two to four weeks.
246th Infantry Regiment	Effective	This regiment has not been located since the current major NVA offensive began. However, we believe it is operating in the Cam Lo area of central Quang Tri Province conducting rear security and logistic operations. The regiment has probably sustained some casualties from Allied tactical air operations in Quang Tri Province.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
<u>Military Region Tri-Thien-Hue</u>		
4th Infantry Regiment	Unknown	This regiment was last located by COMINT on 31 July 1971 near the Thua Thien/Quang Nam Province border area southwest of Hue City. If the unit is operational, we believe it is operating south of Hue City near Route 1.
5th Infantry Regiment	Effective	Since 1 April 1972 this regiment has been targeting friendly positions near Phu Bai, south of Hue City. It has not seen heavy combat action; but in early May 1971, COMINT revealed that the regimental headquarters had experienced a direct hit from Allied air strikes -- casualties unknown. In mid-June 1972 the regimental headquarters was located southwest of Hue City.
6th Infantry Regiment	Ineffective	This regiment has been operating with the 803rd Regiment/324B NVA Division in the vicinity of FSB Bastogne, west of Hue City, since mid-March 1972. It has experienced heavy combat action and probably has sustained very heavy casualties. In early June 1972 the regiment conducted additional heavy attacks against First ARVN Division units and is considered combat ineffective for at least another two weeks.
711th NVA Division*		
31st	Effective	This division has been targeting friendly forces in the Hiep Duc/Tam Ky City area of Quang Tin Province. The capture of Hiep Duc City in April 1972 resulted in moderate casualties for the 31st and 38th Regiments and additional attacks on Que Son City in Quang Tin Province in late May 1972 caused both regiments to withdraw into the mountains west of Que Son City. Recent evidence suggests that sufficient time has elapsed to allow the units to resume combat operations. The 270th Regiment has engaged in light combat activity since early June 1972 near Que Son City.
270th	Effective	
38th	Effective	

* The 711th NVA Division was initially identified on 1 April 1972 by COMINT. The nucleus of the division was formed from existing units in Quang Nam Province, the 31st and 38th Infantry Regiments. A third infantry regiment, identified as the 270th infiltrated to Quang Nam Province in March 1972.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
<u>Military Region 2</u>		
320th NVA Division		
48th	Marginally effective	The entire division has experienced heavy combat activity since March in western Kontum Province. Some of the division's units have been engaged in blocking ARVN attempts to reopen Route 14 from Pleiku to Kontum City, while others participated in the assault on friendly positions around Kontum itself. All three infantry regiments of the 320th Division are currently rated as ineffective or marginally effective. The 52nd and the 64th withdrew north of Kontum in early June to refit. These units could probably be ready to resume offensive activity in two or three weeks. The 48th Regiment is engaged in blocking Kontum Pass. The unit has reportedly lost its deputy chief of staff and one of its battalion commanders as well as half of its combat strength. While elements of the 48th may be able to continue to hold limited defensive positions, the unit will need to rest and refit before undertaking significant offensive operations.
52nd	Ineffective	
64th	Ineffective	
54th Artillery Regiment	Effective	
2nd NVA Division		
1st VC	Ineffective	This division suffered significant casualties as a result of Allied air strikes during the attack on Tan Canh in late April. In late May, after regrouping, the division attacked Kontum City and was repulsed. The unit is believed to have suffered heavy casualties in the attack, and both its regiments are currently believed to be ineffective. They withdrew to refit in early June and could be ready for combat in two or three weeks.
141st	Ineffective	

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
<u>B-3 Front</u>		
28th Infantry Regiment	Ineffective	These regiments have been active along Route 14 between Dak To and Kontum City. They have attacked ARVN lines of communications and also participated in the assault on Kontum City. These regiments have reportedly suffered heavy casualties. The 28th Regiment is reported to have suffered around 900 casualties and to have had its strength reduced from a pre-offensive level of 1,500 men to 700 men by late May or early June. Both units are currently refitting, but could be back in action in about two weeks.
66th Infantry Regiment	Marginally effective	
95B Infantry Regiment	Effective	This regiment has been active along Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum Cities. Its combat activity has been limited chiefly to the interdiction of Route 14. Recently the regiment had heavy combat engagements with friendly ground forces along the road.
40th Artillery Regiment	Effective	The regiment has been providing artillery support for units of the 320th and 2nd NVA Divisions and the B-3 Front since mid-March 1972. It has probably sustained most of its casualties from Allied air strikes. The regiment provided substantial artillery support during the attacks on Kontum City and is now positioned to prevent ARVN from pursuing enemy units in their refitting areas.
400th Sapper Regiment	Effective	This regiment is a newly organized unit consisting of both traditional and new sapper elements in the B-3 Front. It has been targeting South Vietnamese firebases in western Kontum Province and elements participated in the attack on Kontum City with heavy losses.
203rd Armor Regiment	Ineffective	This regiment was initially identified in the 2nd NVA Division's attack on Dak To and Tan Canh. Field reports suggest Allied air strikes destroyed a number of the regiment's tanks. Elements of the regiment are located with the 320th and 2nd NVA Divisions and recently participated in the attack on Kontum City. This regiment has reportedly lost about 75% of its tanks and is rated ineffective. It is unlikely that the unit will receive replacement tanks until next dry season.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
3rd NVA Division		This division has had a dual mission of occupying the northern portion of Binh Dinh Province and conducting interdiction operations along Route 19 between Qui Nhon City and Pleiku City. The 2nd and 21st Regiments have been engaged in offensive operations in northern Binh Dinh Province near the district towns of Hoai Nhon, Bong Son, and Tan Quan, meeting only moderate friendly resistance. The 12th Regiment was engaged heavily by Korean forces and Allied tactical air in the vicinity of An Khe Pass and was forced to withdraw south of Route 19 in early May. In early June, elements of the 3rd Division attacked ARVN forces at Phu My on the coast of Binh Dinh Province.
2nd Regiment	Effective	
12th Regiment	Effective	
21st Regiment	Effective	
<u>Military Region 3</u>		
5th Division*		This division was reportedly assigned the task of spearheading the enemy drive southward, opening a way into Gia Dinh Province. It has been supported by tanks and armored personnel carriers, by elements of the 429th Sapper Group, and by fire support elements from the 69th Artillery Command. The offensive in MR 3 was initiated with the 5th Division's attack and eventual overrunning of Loc Ninh in early April. Most of the division moved southward through Binh Long Province after taking Loc Ninh and on 20 April began attacks on Tri Tam.** Prisoners indicate that the 5th Division has suffered very heavy casualties and has had to alter its goals because the 9th Division was unable to take An Loc. Between 4 and 7 April, as the entire division awaited the arrival of armored support before attacking Loc Ninh, it suffered heavy losses from air and artillery strikes. Subsequently, in the battles for Tri Tam and later An Loc, heavy losses were again sustained by the Division. It was reorganized, refitted, and sent to the Parrot's Beak where, according to prisoners, the 174th and 275th Regiments have again suffered heavy casualties. We estimate that, although elements of the division may continue fighting, it will be 2 to 4 weeks before this division could again be considered combat effective.
E6 Regiment	Effective	
174th Regiment	Ineffective	
275th Regiment	Ineffective	

* Moved into MR 3 from Cambodia for the current offensive.

** Enemy pressure in Tri Tam eased during the first week in May and the 5th Division moved back northward to An Loc to try to destroy ARVN forces there. Like the 9th Division, it was unsuccessful in taking An Loc.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
7th Division*		The 7th Division has been responsible for interdicting Route 13 both north and south of An Loc and has been successful in accomplishing this task. The 7th has engaged in some heavy fighting, and its 209th Regiment has taken heavy casualties but the division still appears to be reasonable effective against the weakened ARVN forces it is facing. The strength of the 209th Regiment is so diminished, however, that it will probably take 4 to 6 weeks to rebuild it. According to ARVN sensitive sources, the 209th has only between 17 and 25 men per company and suffers from shortages of ammunition and food.
141st Regiment	Effective	
165th Regiment	Marginally effective	
209th Regiment	Ineffective	
9th Division*		The 9th Division had primary responsibility for attacking An Loc. All regiments of the division are now known to have been heavily engaged in battles there. The 9th, which did not accomplish its goal of taking An Loc, has undoubtedly suffered heavy casualties in the savage fighting there and is now considered ineffective. According to one probably overly optimistic ARVN source, the body count of enemy dead around An Loc could run as high as 1,000. This was before the Communist 5th Division had been committed to the fighting there. Reporting indicates that coordination between Communist tanks and infantry in the fighting was poor. It also indicates that men of the 9th have at times been very short of food because of supply difficulties. We believe that there were substantial numbers of replacement personnel in place for the 9th Division, but that the green troops and cadre reduced the combat effectiveness of the division. In mid-May the headquarters of the 9th Division relocated into Phuoc Long Province. The division is probably undergoing regrouping and refitting, although at least parts of two of its regiments appear to be still near An Loc. We believe it will take at least 4 to 6 weeks to reconstitute the division. These operations may already be well under way. A prisoner captured just south of An Loc on 9 June who was part of a ten-man replacement group to the 8th Battalion, 95C Regiment, reported that before the battalion was reinforced by his group it was down to only 37 men and had lost its battalion commander and all company commanders.
271st Regiment	Ineffective	
272nd Regiment	Ineffective	
95C Regiment	Ineffective	

* Moved into MR 3 from Cambodia for the current offensive.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
C-30B Division*		
24th Regiment	Effective	
207th Regiment	Effective	
271st Regiment	Ineffective	The 271st and 24th Regiments have reportedly been operating together as a new division (C-30B) in Tay Ninh Province and in the Parrot's Beak along Route 1. Recent reporting indicated that the 207th Regiment is now also a part of the C-30B Division. In the Parrot's Beak, the division was successful for a time in interdicting Route 1. In southern Tay Ninh Province during the last four days of April, however, the 271st Regiment was badly mauled by Vietnamese regional forces and elements of the ARVN 25th Division supported effectively by artillery and tactical air strikes. The 271st was hit hard again in mid-May and as of that time had been reduced to a strength of about 1,500 men, compared with 2,400 when the offensive began. The 271st has continued to sustain substantial casualties. Morale in this unit is very low, and troops have threatened violence to several of their commanders "for leading them into battle to be massacred." We believe it will take 4 to 6 weeks before the 271st could possibly be combat effective again. As of 1 June, the 24th Regiment was still in good shape. It is operating with support from the 12th Sapper Battalion of the 429th Sapper Group.
69th Artillery Command*		
208 Artillery Regiment	Ineffective	
211th Artillery Regiment	Unknown	
96th Artillery Regiment	Effective	The 69th Artillery Command has been responsible for providing fire support for the 5th, 7th, and 9th Divisions. We believe that the 69th has operated effectively with the equipment that it has had, but, because of an apparent underestimation of Allied capabilities in MR 3, the Command may not have the types and amounts of equipment necessary to accomplish its goals. However, more and heavier equipment, including 130-mm artillery, is reportedly in transit to MR 3.
429th Sapper Group**	Effective	Some units of the 429th Sapper Group have been noted operating in support of the 5th Division and the 24th Regiment. Most of the Group is reportedly being held in reserve, however.
33rd NVA Regiment**	Effective	The 33rd Regiment has been noted in operations in conjunction with the 274th Regiment in Phuoc Tuy Province in May and June.
101st NVA Regiment**	Unknown	The 101st Regiment has probably been engaged in the fighting along Route 13 south of An Loc. It is not known what casualties this unit may have taken. However, it recently returned to its base area presumably for reorganization and refitting.

* Moved into MR 3 from Cambodia for the current offensive.

** Already in MR 3 before the current offensive.

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Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
274th VC Regiment*	Effective	The 274th Regiment has been active in harassing Allied positions in Phuoc Tuy Province and in conjunction with the 33rd Regiment has overrun several hamlets and villages. ARVN has very few forces in the area to counter the 274th and 33rd Regiments. However, the appointment of a new provincial chief in Phuoc Tuy Province seems to have helped stabilize the situation there.
U/I Armor Regiment	Ineffective	Armor has been used extensively in the battles for An Loc and to a lesser extent to support actions of the C-30B Division. At least one battalion of this regiment is believed to be from the 203rd Armor Regiment. Because of losses and the current rains, we believe that the regiment is now capable of only limited activity for at least the next three months.
<u>Military Region 4</u>		
Phuoc Long Front (1st Division)		
44th Regiment	Marginally effective	After heavy and extended fighting, first in Kampot Province, Cambodia, in April and then lesser activity in Chau Doc Province in May, the 1st Division apparently began to withdraw to secure areas in Cambodia in early June to refit and replace heavy casualties. This process may already have been completed, but, in any event, the division easily could be returned to effective status by early July.
48th Regiment	Marginally effective	
52nd Regiment	Marginally effective	
101-D Regiment	Marginally effective	
Probable 11th Division**		
D-2 Regiment	Effective	After a round of heavy fighting in early April, the 11th Division was relatively inactive until recent days, during which it has been moderately active. The division is now posing a threat to the capital of Chuong Thien as well as border areas of western Chuong Thien and northern An Xuyen Province. Elements of one regiment, the 95th, are operating in An Xuyen separate from the main body of the division in Chuong Thien. Several battalions of the 11th Division have been badly hurt in the offensive, and probably have not been rebuilt.
18-B Regiment	Effective	
95th Regiment	Effective	
D-1 Regiment	Effective	

* Already in MR 3 before the current offensive.

** Newly designated divisional headquarters superimposed on already existing enemy regiments in the Delta.

Area and Unit	Combat Status	Remarks
Probable 320th Division*		
Z-15 Regiment (AKA 88th)	Effective	The 320th Division was reportedly formed in mid-April. Two of its subordinate regiments (Z-15 and Z-18) have been charged with clearing an infiltration route from Cambodia to Dinh Tuong and are now operating in that province and along the infiltration route. Fighting in the area has become heavy in recent weeks, and both regiments probably have taken moderate casualties. The Z-17 Regiment arrived from North Vietnam in late March and has the mission of shielding the division's rear area in Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. To date, it has seen little action, but 10% of the unit's 1,200 to 1,400 men reportedly deserted after infiltration.
Z-17 Regiment	Effective	
Z-18 Regiment (AKA 32nd)	Effective	
Dong Thap 1 Regiment	Effective	This regiment has been involved in extensive fighting in recent weeks in Dinh Tuong Province. No information is available, but casualties probably have been moderate.
D-3 Regiment	Effective	This regiment was apparently involved in light to moderate fighting in May and somewhat heavier fighting in recent weeks, and probably has been responsible for a considerable loss in security in Vinh Long. No information is available but casualties probably have been light to moderate.

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* Newly designated divisional headquarters superimposed on already existing enemy regiments in the Delta. In addition, one regiment of the probable 320th Division -- the Z-17 -- is a newly infiltrated unit.

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